8th grade Online Book Review

Day 1 - What makes a good review?

As students log into the computers, pass out the student worksheet (last page of this file, which could be projected onto the board for students to complete on their own paper). Ask students to write down the titles and authors if known of three books that they have read and remember. This might be AR books or books read in your class this year or it might be children's books from long ago, such as "The Cat in the Hat". Assist students to ensure that all students have chosen novels that will have reviews online.

Ask students to explain what is meant by a book review and discuss. Now, have students go to an online book review site, such as http://www.barnesandnoble.com OR http://www.teenink.com/reviews/book\_reviews . Go over how to use the site chosen, then have students to use the site to complete their worksheet. If students finish early, allow them to search for other books, look around the site chosen, or search for information on a book club. After students finished the worksheet, discuss what makes a good review using these points from techsteps.com.

"How do the following characteristics compare to your understanding about a good review?

**A good review:**

* Is usually 300 words or less, but will vary depending on your audience
* Does not give away plot surprises or the ending
* Includes discussion of [**key elements**](javascript:openPopup('pp006.htm',360,270);) in the book
* Is well-organized and polished
* Includes evidence that supports the reviewer's judgment about the book"

It is now time to start working on the Book Review. Have students to open the Book Review Template from the tech step page titled "Your Book Review". Go over the parts of the review and discuss what is expected to be placed in each section. Try to begin writing on day 1.

Day 2 - Students are to write their book review. They must place their final version into the Book Review Template and save the file under their own name on the server. If there is time, start peer reviews today.

Day 3 - Editing and Publishing (Lab)

It is now time to review your book review. Students will review their work, edit it, and have a peer edit it as well.

Publication - students will publish the review online. Students will publish their work on a site of the teacher's choosing. Students must preview the work and have their partner review it as well before submitting the final version for publication.

Day 4 - Reflection (In the Classroom)

Answer the following three questions from techsteps.com

**Reflection**

* What are the pros and cons of sharing opinions of products online?
* There are many reasons to publish to a global audience such as to seek feedback, for artistic expression, to contribute to a knowledge base, to collect data, or to seek solutions to problems. What specific situations can you think of that would prompt you to use online communication for any of these purposes?
* How has technology changed the way we communicate and publish information?

Websites suggested by techsteps.com

Here are sites where you can read and/or post reviews:

* Book Hooks   
  http://www.bookhooks.com
* Kids' Review  
  http://www.kidsreview.org.uk
* Teen Ink  
  http://www.teenink.com/reviews/book\_reviews
* Teen Reads  
  http://www.teenreads.com/index.asp
* Barnes and Noble  
  http://www.barnesandnoble.com
* Amazon  
  http:// http://www.amazon.com
* SCPLS Booklist   
  http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/lls/library/kids/kids\_booklists.html
* AADL World of Reading  
  http://www.worldreading.org
* Kids Bookshelf   
  http://www.kidsbookshelf.com/
* Stories From the Web  
  http://www.storiesfromtheweb.org/
* Shelfari   
  http://www.shelfari.com

**Book Review Sites and Personal Information**

In many of the sites above you may be required to provide personal information and individual email addresses to post reviews. You, your teacher, and your parents will want to discuss this. Here are a few hints:

* Read the Privacy Policy for each site to be aware of their security and policies surrounding their protection of personal information
* Even if an email address is needed, sites will not publish your email and full name on the site with your review, but will allow a screen name to protect your identity.
* If your district policy doesn't allow the disclosure of personal information, you and your classmates may want to post on a school blog or Web site. Your teacher could also set up a class blog (perhaps using edublogs.org or classchatter.com) and invite parents and other known classes to participate so that you will widen your reading community beyond your classroom.
* Some sites will publish without the use of an individual email address (subject to change). For example:
* Kids' Review (http://www.kidsreview.org.uk) allows a Demo ID account for publishing
* Book Hooks (http://www.bookhooks.com) assigns a report number and only requires you to provide your first name. The email address used can be your teacher's class email.
* AADL World of Reading (http://www.worldreading.org) allows teachers to write to the site manager to set up review publishing for their students.

Online Book Review

1. Book 1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Book 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Book 3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Choose one of your books from above. Place an asterisk (\*) beside of the title chosen in #1. Type the title into the search bar on the online book review site. Read two editorial reviews. The editorial reviews included what type of information?

3. Now, read at least four customer/reader reviews. Do you agree with the rating of the book that was provided by the other readers? Why? What comments did you agree or disagree with?

4. What information did you find helpful in the reviews? Did it come from an editor's review or a reader's review?

5. List three items that are important to include in a review.

6. Are the three things in #5 the items that a reader would want in a review? If yes, why? If not, what else should be included?